



### **What is CMV (cytomegalovirus)?**

CMV is a virus that is harmless to most people. CMV is a member of the herpes group of viruses.

### **Who is at risk for problems from CMV?**

Three groups of people are at higher risk of problems from CMV:

- Babies born to women infected with CMV for the first time during pregnancy. About 7 percent to 10 percent of these babies will have symptoms at birth or will develop disabilities including mental retardation, small head size, hearing loss and delays in development.
- People on certain drugs or medicines such as chemotherapy or organ transplant medicines. If infected, these people may get a more serious illness.
- People who can't fight infection (those with immune deficiency diseases such as HIV or AIDS) also may develop serious illness.

### **What are the symptoms of CMV?**

Most adults and children who catch CMV have no symptoms and are not harmed by the virus. Symptoms some people may get are fever, sore throat, fatigue and swollen glands.

### **How soon do symptoms appear?**

Unknown.

### **How is CMV spread?**

- Direct person-to-person contact with infected secretions and urine.
- Mother to infant before, during and following birth.
- Blood transfusions from an infected person.

### **When and for how long is a person able to spread the disease?**

People can spread the disease as long as the virus is in body secretions, which can be months or years. Because this virus is so common in child-care settings, excluding infected children from the day care won't reduce the spread of the disease.

### **How is a person diagnosed?**

Laboratory tests can be ordered to diagnose CMV in a person with symptoms. Blood tests can be done to see if the person was infected with CMV in the past.

**What is the treatment?**

There is no treatment for CMV.

**Does past infection make a person immune?**

No, but most people do not ever have signs or symptoms if the virus does enter their body.

**Should children or others be excluded from day care, school, work or other activities if they have CMV?**

No, unless the child is unable to participate in activities and staff determine that they cannot care for the child without compromising their ability to care for the other children.

**What can be done to prevent the spread of CMV disease?**

Wash your hands often.

**Additional Information:**

Additional information is available at [www.ndhealth.gov/disease](http://www.ndhealth.gov/disease) or by calling the North Dakota Department of Health at 800.472.2180.

Resource: American Academy of Pediatrics. Cytomegalovirus Infection] In: Pickering LK, ed. *Red Book: 2003 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases*. 26<sup>th</sup> ed. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; 2003:259-262.

